
From: Jon O'Connell
To: Sternberg, David
Sent: 8/12/2013 5:16:06 PM
Subject: RE: Dimock Inquiry

Mr. Sternberg:

Thank you for your response.

Sincerely,

Jon O'Connell
Staff Reporter

*The Times Leader | Weekender | Sunday Dispatch
The Abington Journal | The Dallas Post | Go Lackawanna | Bazaar*

15 North Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711
O: 570.970.7210

A Civitas Media Company

From: Sternberg, David <Sternberg.David@epa.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2013 5:01 PM
To: Jon O'Connell
Cc: White, Terri-A
Subject: Dimock Inquiry

Mr. O'Connell

Terri White forwarded your inquiry me your inquiry.

-Did the investigation end because EPA officials determined fracking, specifically, did not cause contamination?

EPA's effort in Dimock was undertaken using the agency's Superfund authority to determine whether there was a health concern in private drinking water wells, not an investigation to determine a source of contamination. We conducted several rounds of sampling and the results did not indicate levels of contaminants that would give EPA reason to take further action. Throughout EPA's work in Dimock, the agency used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water.

- Do EPA officials agree the water is no longer contaminated or never was contaminated?

After the initial round of sampling, and to provide certainty to residents and ensure a thorough and accurate analysis, EPA determined that resampling was necessary at four wells where Cabot data showed levels of contaminants that posed a health concern, but where EPA's initial round of sampling data did not detect levels that would require action. At one of those wells EPA did find an elevated level of manganese in untreated well water. The two residences serviced by the well each had water treatment systems that can reduce manganese to levels that do not present a health concern.

During the sampling in Dimock, EPA found hazardous substances, specifically arsenic, barium or manganese, all of which are also naturally occurring substances, in well water at levels that could present a health concern. At the time EPA concluded its actions in Dimock, in all cases the residents had or were going to have their own treatment systems that could reduce concentrations of those hazardous substances to acceptable levels at the tap

- What does EPA intend to do about property owners who say their water is still contaminated?

EPA's goal in Dimock was to provide the community with reliable data about the presence of contaminants in their drinking water and to determine whether further action was warranted to protect public health. EPA's sampling was a direct result of requests from Dimock residents and our actions were guided entirely by science and the law. The agency was clear that if it saw an immediate threat to public health, it would take steps under the law to protect residents whose health may be at risk.

We conducted several rounds of sampling and the results did not indicate levels of contaminants that would give EPA reason to take further action. EPA has provided the residents with all of their sampling results and has no further plans to conduct additional drinking water sampling in Dimock.

David Sternberg
Press Officer
U.S.EPA

Looking to clear up a few facts regarding the water well-contamination investigation in Dimock, Pa., I hope you can answer these three questions:

- Did the investigation end because EPA officials determined fracking, specifically, did not cause contamination?
- Do EPA officials agree the water is no longer contaminated or never was contaminated?
- What does EPA intend to do about property owners who say their water is still contaminated?

I hope you can offer some guidance here. Thank you.

Jon O'Connell
Staff Reporter

*The Times Leader | Weekender | Sunday Dispatch
The Abington Journal | The Dallas Post | Go Lackawanna | Bazaar*

15 North Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711
O: 570.970.7210